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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/825,542	04/15/2004	Alan Robinson	920537-95908	8240

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EXAMINER

SINGH, DALZID E

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2613

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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07/02/2007

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/825,542

Applicant(s)

ROBINSON, ALAN

Examiner

Dalzid Singh

Art Unit

2613

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 March 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-44 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 18-21, 42 and 43 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-17 and 22-40 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 41 and 42 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election without traverse of the restriction requirement in the reply filed on 09 March 2007 is acknowledged.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

2. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

Claims 41 and 42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

Claim 41 recites, "A computer program comprising code means ... , the code means comprising instructions..." The claim does not recite that the computer program is encoded on a computer readable medium. Computer program which is not encoded in a computer readable medium is non-statutory.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claims 41 and 42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 41, recites "A computer program comprising code means ... , the code means comprising instructions for controlling the system to: receive a signal from the transmitter at the receiver; convert the received optical signal to an electric signal; perform analogue to digital conversion; and analyse the electrical digital signal to derive information concerning characteristics of individual spans from the electrical digital signal.

It is unclear how a computer program or code of instruction converts optical signal to electrical signal or perform analogue to digital conversion. These functions require means. It is unclear how the computer program alone performs these functions.

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 1-17, 22 and 23-40 are allowed.
6. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

Claims 1 and 23 are allowable because the prior art of record (US Patent No. 6,718,138) to Sugawara does not teach or fairly disclose an optical communications system, comprising optical to electrical conversion circuitry for converting the received optical signal to an electric signal; analogue to digital conversion circuitry; and digital signal processing means for analysing the electrical digital signal, wherein the digital signal processing means derives information concerning characteristics of individual spans from the electrical digital signal.

Claim 22 Claim 1 is allowable because the prior art of record (US Patent No. 6,718,138) to Sugawara does not teach or fairly disclose a receiver for use in an optical communications system for receiving an optical signal from an optical link comprising a plurality of spans, the receiver comprising: optical to electrical conversion circuitry for converting a received optical signal to an electric signal; analogue to digital conversion circuitry; and digital signal processing means for analysing the electrical digital signal, wherein the digital signal processing means derives information concerning characteristics of individual spans from the electrical digital signal.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Bischoff (US Patent No. 6,836,620) is cited to show method for monitoring the signal quality in transparent optical networks.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dalzid Singh whose telephone number is (571) 272-3029. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri 9am - 5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jason Chan can be reached on (571) 272-3022. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

DS
June 7, 2007

DALZID SINGH
PRIMARY EXAMINER

Dalzid Singh